

**Mission Bay Landfill
Technical Advisory Committee
City Administration Building
12th Floor Conference Room B
October 21, 2005
10:00am to 12:00pm**

Meeting Minutes

TAC Members Present

Donna Frye
David Kennedy, DDS
Barry Pulver

Rebecca Lafreniere
Judy Swink
Brian McDaniel

Ben Leaf
David Huntley Ph.D.
Jeffrey Gordon, MD
Robert Curtis

TAC Members Absent

Bruce Reznik
John Wilks

Robert Tukey Ph.D.
Frank Gormlie

Interested Parties/Alternates

Scott Andrews
George Murphy
Tessa McRae
Corrine Brindley

Kathleen Blavatt
Patrick Owen
Vicky Gallagher
Hiram Sarabia

John Fields
Susan Orlofsky
Wayne William

Staff

Steven Fontana
Chris Gonaver

Ray Purtee

The meeting was called to order by Councilmember Frye. Self introductions were made. A quorum was present.

Councilmember Frye introduced Mr. Wayne William of the County of San Diego who will be reviewing the draft site assessment report.

Approval of Minutes

August meeting minutes were reviewed and approved with no changes.

Public Comment

Scott Andrews informed the group that because the draft site assessment report lacks an executive summary, groups such as Targhee, Inc. and the Center for Environmental Health are withholding comments on the report. Councilmember Frye responded that all interested parties

are encouraged to attend these meetings and participate in this TAC process, and would Scott please ask these groups to attend?

Steve Fontana requested that all comments to the draft site assessment report be submitted in writing, on paper or via email, so that the exact comment is captured and to assist SCS with compiling and responding to them. Former TAC member Chuck Budinger has submitted written comments and these were made available to the group. Would the TAC consider using the subcommittee to assist in the review of this voluminous report? The reality is we have limited resources and funding; could a target date of the end of the year be set to complete the draft report review? Then the final document could be presented to the regulators.

Dr. Gordon responded by saying that he supports a time limited discussion of written comments- two meetings should do it. Basically, comments fall into one of two categories- restructuring of the report and technical comments such as including restraints on future land uses of the landfill. He feels that Chuck Budinger's comments concerning bacterial contamination are outside the scope of this site assessment which is focused on toxic contaminants.

Dr. Huntley voiced agreement; he didn't see any technical errors, rather the report needs re-organizing to condense and eliminate duplicate analyses; clean up minor typos and edit language, and needs to be finalized so the group can move on to broader issues of mitigation and site use.

Scott Andrews supported holding all technical comment discussions here at the TAC; not as a subcommittee. The group agreed to not have a technical subcommittee working separately on comments to the draft report.

The group came to agreement that not having an executive summary was a main issue. A motion was made and approved that the report should have an Executive Summary with key findings and recommendations.

Site Assessment Report

TAC member's comments to the draft site assessment report were reviewed starting with Judy Swink's. Her comment to the report is editorial in nature- various sections of the report need to "flow" better for the reader. She will present written recommendations concerning this to the TAC.

A comment from the group was made that there has been discussion of a possible tier 2 study; is there an intent to have a tier 2 study? Councilmember Frye replied that eventually all issues will be addressed, but today we want to get thru as many comments to the draft report as we can to ensure that SCS and everyone else understands them. She then asked Dr. Gordon to go over his comments to the draft report.

Dr. Gordon went thru his written comments item by item. Item 1: there must be an executive summary. Item 2 is there should be some statements in the report about limitations of land uses given the report results.

Tessa McRae of SCS responded that an environmental consultant doesn't decide land use issues and a risk assessment normally judges risks in a residential setting.

A member of the group stated that since the landfill is within a park, couldn't the report point out whether irrigation, planting grass and soccer fields were feasible? Or point out what information in the report is relevant to developing this area as a park? If there's a risk of restrooms exploding due to high methane levels in the soil, shouldn't the report point this out?

Councilmember Frye said that perhaps after the regulators review the report this would be part of their comments.

Tessa responded that the report does give relative information such as areas where cover thickness is thin, and hence there shouldn't be trenches for utilities. But she feels this report should not decide planned uses of the site. Let this group and the regulatory agencies decide how to use the information in the report to develop the site. Perhaps an executive summary could point this out.

Judy Swink brought up that there is a Master Plan for Mission Bay Park that includes the South Shores area where the landfill is located. There was a lot of public involvement in creating the Master Plan and the planned uses of the area are already described. Perhaps those uses addressing the South Shores area could be extracted from the Master Plan and distributed to the TAC? Councilmember Frye asked Judy to do so.

Discussion ensued and a comment was made that any future construction would have to consider the methane and hydrogen sulfide levels found in the soils of the area. It would be unlikely that the Local Enforcement Agency (LEA) for landfills would allow a new structure to be built on top of the landfill. A question was asked "why did you use word 'unlikely?'" Answer was that given enough money, from an engineering perspective anything could be built. The limiting factor would be cost.

Councilmember Frye stated that perhaps an appendix in the report could contain the South Shores portion of the Master Plan. Then with an executive summary extracting all building limitations and land use constraints, people could evaluate the Master Plan uses against the report's limitations.

Dr. Gordon continued on with item 3, then item 4 of his comments. Item 4 raised the issue of discussing funding and action to correct areas of thin cover.

Councilmember Frye responded that the TAC will eventually prioritize all issues identified within the report, such as cover thickness and land use constraints, and make "group recommendations" concerning them.

The issue of sensitive species preservation at the site was brought up. Judy will include the discussion section on sensitive species from the Master Plan in her distribution.

Item 5 concerns the Western portion of the landfill where Sea World's parking lots are; here the landfill has inaccurate boundaries and high gas levels and this should be addressed by the group. Pat Owen responded that Sea World's Eastern parking lots have always been acknowledged in previous reports as being over the landfill. Councilmember Frye recalled that the Journey To Atlantis (JTA) reports had a lot of subsurface data in them and could Pat bring an expert on them to a future meeting for further discussion? Pat answered in the affirmative.

A question was asked “What buildings does Sea World propose in the Eastern expansion?” Pat Owen answered that the parking lot expansion is currently pending the outcome of this site assessment report.

Councilmember Frye said the TAC recommendations on land use should include City plans, the Boat and Ski Club issue, and Sea World’s plans.

A question was asked that perhaps Tessa McRae of SCS can comment on where site assessment data and a proposed use conflict? Dr. Huntley responded that all Tessa can comment on are issues that must be taken into account for any proposed uses. An example would be a methane extraction system underneath a foundation for a Boat and Ski Club building.

A comment was made to not forget the Love Canal where piercing the cap exposed people to more than methane.

Item 6 asks for clarification of the statement in the report that “Human Health Risk Assessment and Ecological Risk Assessment...has rarely been applied to old or new landfills?” Tessa replied that she will ask Mr. Biezer of SCS what is meant by that statement.

Dr. Gordon summed up item 7 by saying that generally speaking since no VOCs or HVOCs were found at high levels then were there drums in the landfill? Why are our findings so bland? Where did all the toxic wastes go? There needs to be discussion in the report about this. Tessa replied that she will have Jay Jones of SCS comment on this.

Questions were asked “Where is the paid researcher that the City had working on this?” “Where are the documents quantifying the toxic wastes?” Dr. Huntley responded by saying that the report needs to acknowledge reported comments on toxic dumping; then if we could get even broad numbers on quantities dumped, we could perform calculations on whether they’re still there. Tessa agreed that if the number of drums or amount of a particular waste could be quantified, then a calculation of chemical breakdown products remaining could be performed.

A comment was made that the presentation on historical aerial photographs outside of this landfill needs to be reviewed- was there another area where these drums were dumped?

Dr. Gordon stated that one of the reasons SCS was hired was their environmental forensics staff. Is there evidence of these barrels? The report lacks explicit discussion of these barrels. Tessa responded that a review of historical photos had only showed an area where a pond possibly was and the subcommittee agreed to put a boring there. Laboratory results were only slightly higher there and didn’t affect the risk assessment.

A question was asked has anyone approached the military and industry to ask them to quantify the number of drums dumped at the site? Steve Fontana replied no, only information on dischargers has been collected so far; without proof or the results of this report, the dischargers have not been approached.

Scott Andrews commented that the EPA ranked this site the 35th worst in the nation, higher than the Love Canal. He is amazed and thinks it is criminal that given this fact and the documents available on toxic discharging that the City hasn’t approached the dischargers. He has seen some of these documents in the City’s files.

Dr. Gordon stated that no matter what the history of dumping at the site, the findings of this report show little risk due to toxics.

Councilmember Frye asked that anyone who has evidence of barrel dumping, such as documents or photos, to please turn them in to this group.

Dr. Gordon continued with his comments going thru items 8, 9, 10 and 11. Concerning his item 11, he reiterated that because of the high probability that industrial wastes were dumped, COPC's should be stated early in the report, not in an appendix.

In item 13 he wonders why some of the Woodward Clyde data on mercury is accepted and some is considered not reliable? What type of mercury was discovered and what is its disposition?

Items 14 and 15 require that the report expand on the precautionary principle, and that section 8.5.1 of the report does apply to the landfill. Tessa replied that she will run these comments by Paul Damian of SCS.

Items 16 thru 18 were reviewed and on item 19, he couldn't find table 4.7. Tessa replied that it's on page 39 and is actually table 4.5, so the reference to table 4.7 is a typo.

Dr. Gordon reviewed items 20 and 21, and concluded by stating that he spent a long time reviewing the report and was lost on the discussion of COPC's. The findings need to be highlighted and gone thru one by one to show which are relevant to the landfill, or not relevant due to pollution by motor boats, sewage spills, etc.

Attention of the group turned to Dr. Huntley's comments. His comment number 1 concerned the direction of groundwater flow and the 25 hour tidal cycle. It's confusing in the report because the text says time average but figure 4.8 does not- they should be consistent.

Comment number 2 is that there should be an executive summary.

Comment number 3 concerns "hot button issues" such as thallium- if it's not detected, then why doesn't the report explicitly address this? It shouldn't be ignored simply because it didn't show up in sampling.

Comment #4 has already been discussed- final disposition of deposited industrial wastes.

Comment #5: It's unclear how the landfill boundary has been delineated. Some boreholes within the "footprint" show no wastes. Does the landfill gas survey suggest the extent of the landfill? Or Sea World's studies on gas? Should these be ignored or combined? The report needs to explain what information was used to delineate the boundary. Where would a zero foot contour be drawn of the waste thickness? Tessa responded that some cells of the landfill had thick soil walls; aerial photos and a combination of other data went into producing the landfill boundary shown. She agreed that more discussion on delineating the landfill boundaries should be included in the report.

A suggestion was made to use different color lines on the landfill boundaries map for delineating borings, or other sources of information on waste thickness.

Dr. Huntley finished reviewing his comments to the report and the group moved on to Brian McDaniel's comments.

Brian felt that it's interesting to see the limits of the landfill and locations of borings superimposed on historical and recent photos. This current assessment should be tied into the previous site assessment. The document could "flow" better for the reader. It should include the previous Solid Waste Assessment Test (SWAT) report. The geophysics performed yielded little data and seemed inconclusive.

Questions about the geophysics included "Would the geophysics performed had picked up drums if they are present? And "Was there a problem with the cover thickness and salinity interfering with the magnetometer?" Dr. Huntley responded by saying that there were two surveys performed- one with a magnetometer and one for conductivity. The magnetometer should have picked up drums but the conclusions were not clear. Interference would have come from buried utility lines and variations in cover thickness. Tessa added that the subcommittee had reviewed magnetometer readings and a boring was placed in a "hot" area, but nothing unusual was found.

Brian McDaniel continued with his comments. There should have been additional samplings of the new groundwater wells, rather than just the one sampling performed by this report. But he isn't implying yet that these new wells should be part of the City's regular monitoring network. MTBE was discovered but to his knowledge wasn't a chemical that existed in the 1950's.

Steve Fontana added that MTBE is a common fuel additive, and there are higher levels found on the bay side where the jet skis and motor boats are.

Brian concluded his comments by stating he would get them to the group electronically.

Public Comment

Councilmember Frye asked Chris Gonaver if the City has specific documents linking a company to dumping of barrels of industrial waste? Chris responded that he didn't recall seeing this for barrel dumping, but there are things like bills of lading describing quantities of liquid wastes.

Councilmember Frye asked Chris to get these documents to SCS and to show them to the group. We need to explore where barrels were dumped and where are the chemicals today?

A question was asked "If not Mission Bay, where were they dumping these wastes?" Dr Huntley responded that it was common then to have on site evaporation ponds and toxic pits. Why would companies bother to truck wastes when they could dispose of it on site or in the sewer? There is an interesting conjecture in the draft site assessment report that toxic wastes went to Omar Rendering and our test results are orders of magnitude less than the findings at the Omar site.

A question was asked "Has anyone asked the military for their records of waste disposal?" Chris responded that their methods of disposal were similar- dumping on site and toxic pits, etc.

Councilmember Frye shared stories that during the fifties the bay was so polluted that boat hulls would be cleaned of any living creature within a few days of docking in the bay. This report should include discussion on common disposal practices of industrial wastes by private industry and the military in the fifties.

Councilmember Frye concluded the meeting by thanking the group for their time spent on reviewing the report, and to please get their comments in to Ray Purtee, Steven Fontana or Chris Gonaver. At the next meeting we will go over Barry Pulver's comments and the South Shores uses described in the Master Plan.

Future Meetings

- Friday, Nov 18, 2005
- Friday, Dec 9, 2005